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# THE GYPSY AND FOLK-LORE CLUB

## OBJECTS.

To promote fellowship among those interested in GYPSIES and Gypsies themselves. To encourage study of, and conversation in the ROMANI language. To promote a greater interest in the study of FOLK-LORE generally.

## SUBSCRIPTION.

The Subscription has been fixed at £1 annually (or 6/- per quarter) and Membership carries no further liability.

## PROGRAMME.

PREMISES have been taken at 5, Hand Court, where Members have the use of modestly convenient Rooms, decorated in the most approved Gypsy style. A LIBRARY of Gypsy and Folk-Lore Books and Pamphlets is open free to Members. LECTURES and PAPERS upon Gypsy and Folk-Lore subjects are given weekly. CONCERTS and "AT HOMES," at which Gypsy Artists appear, are arranged from time to time. EXHIBITIONS of the famous Metal-working, Basket-making and Tinker-work of the Gypsies are held periodically. PERFORMANCES OF FOLK PLAYS, by Synge, Yeats, Ibsen, and other well-known Dramatists, whose works abound in Folk-Lore, will be a feature of the Club. A JOURNAL, devoted to Gypsy and Folk-Lore, is issued to members publications.

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**ART. V.—***Report of the Metropolitan Commissioners in Lunacy to the Lord Chancellor.* (Presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty.) London, 1844.

**T**HE history of insanity exemplifies an observation frequently made, that in many of the greatest calamities that befal mankind the most poignant miseries are those which are super-added by human folly and ignorance to the dispensations of Providence. The loss of reason is one of the heaviest of these dispensations ; and yet there are grounds for believing that the most acute sufferings which the insane have undergone have arisen in past times from the exaggerated fears and the cruelty of the sane. Lunatics had their golden age, before laws were made, when they wandered forth at large and were revered as saints, or as partaking of something holy or divine ; but with laws and civilization their iron age began. It has continued almost to the present time. During the last half century, however, the treatment of the insane in the civilized countries of Europe has been greatly ameliorated. It is now thought right to exercise towards them the ordinary principles of humanity. We shall endeavour to trace the most remarkable events in the progress of this change. The subject of insanity, and numerous questions connected with it, have of late, owing to a variety of causes, occupied more than usual attention. The appalling attempts on the lives of persons high in office

*—1760. IN NOVEMBER I WROTE A SATIRICAL EPIGRAM ON THE  
MENT OF SOLOMON.—*

‘ 1761. June 11th, wrote an epigram on the Duchess of Grafton going abroad.

‘ Dec. 20th, wrote a few lines to Lady Mary Coke, on her having St. Anthony’s fire in her cheek.

‘ 1772. Sept. Wrote some lines to Lady Anne Fitzpatrick with a present of shells.’—vol. iv. pp. 339-356.

About some of these things and others similarly mentioned we know nothing and care little, but we dare say most of them will be found in Lord Euston’s papers. There is one composition mentioned which excites our curiosity,—

‘ 1766. Aug. 18th. Began Memoirs of the Reign of George the Third.’—vol. iv. p. 352.

These ‘ Memoirs,’ we observe, are advertised as about to be published, in 3 vols. 8vo., under the editorship of Sir Denis Le Marchant. They are probably the contents of the celebrated box B.\*

The following, which looks trivial, may not be without importance:—

‘ 1761. July 16th, wrote the “Garland,” a poem on the King, and sent it to Lady Bute, but not in my own hand, nor with my name, nor did ever own it.’—vol. iv. p. 349.

We know nothing of this piece—and should be glad if it were recovered; if, as may be presumed, it was a panegyric, it would

\* See Lord Holland’s Preface to the *Memoires*, and Quart. Rev., vol. xxvii., p. 179.  
afford

ince and dignity, and other atrocities, in excuse or extenuation of which the plea of insanity has been urged, have excited a strong interest, and have given rise to inquiries as yet scarcely answered to the satisfaction of the public. The imposing appearance of lunatic asylums, generally erected in conspicuous situations, and from year to year multiplied, has spread abroad an apprehension that lunacy is to a fearful degree on the increase. The sympathy of the humane has been awakened; and Parliament will be invited, in the next session, to consider the whole matter with a view to decisive legislation.

Ancient legislation regarded merely the protection of the public against the dangerous acts of lunatics, and that of their families from the dissipation of property. Under the Roman law, if any offence was committed by a reputed lunatic, a formal inquisition was held by the magistrate for the purpose of determining whether madness was real or simulated.\* When insanity was proved to be real and continued, and it appeared that the lunatic was dangerous to society, he was ordered, if of a certain rank, and possessed of wealth, to be shut up in his own house under the care of an appointed guardian, who was responsible for his safe custody. For madmen of an inferior condition no other receptacle was provided than a common prison, where it was expressly enacted that they should be bound, if the officer thought it advisable, with chains. Lunatics who were not dangerous were left to the care of their relatives or friends.

It was not till a comparatively late period that any improvement can be discovered to have taken place in the public provisions for the disposal of lunatics: while, indeed, no hospitals existed for the care of those who laboured under ordinary bodily infirmities, it can be no matter of wonder that none were devoted to the insane.

The era of the Reformation, which was the commencement of so many improvements affecting the comfort as well as the morals of the people of this country, was likewise the epoch of the establishment of the first hospital for lunatics in Britain. Shortly before his death, King Henry VIII. had given the priory of Bethlehem to the City of London. It was soon afterwards devoted to the care and safe custody of lunatics. In 1675, the old building having fallen into a ruinous state, the sum of 17,000*l.* was devoted by the Corporation of London to the erection of a fit edifice. This sum was augmented by a voluntary subscription. By a piece of extreme absurdity it was determined to raise the new building on the model of the Tuilleries in Paris. Such was the great national lunatic asylum of those days, where, according

\* Pothier's edition of the 'Pandects,' lib. 7, p. 444.—Bonfils, 'Essai sur la Jurisprudence Médicale relative aux Aliénés.' Paris. Quarto. 1826.

to the expressions of a sensible writer of the present time (M. Ferrus), ‘Pomp reigned without, and misery within; and where vanity was gratified at the expense of suffering humanity. The unfortunate inmates of this noble mansion were abandoned to the most revolting squalor and wretchedness. Their nakedness and filth were as disgusting to the beholder as the chains and fetters, with which both sexes were loaded, were horrifying and revolting.’

Such was the only noted receptacle for the insane that existed in England for more than two hundred years. It was not till 1751 that another asylum was found necessary, Bethlehem being no longer capable of receiving the number of lunatics that were to be accommodated. The hospital of St. Luke’s was then founded for the reception of 300 patients. But here, as in Bethlehem, chains and fetters were employed without restriction for the coercion of the insane. No attempts at classification on any fixed principle appear to have been made; and the arrangements of both these establishments were similar to those of prisons.

It was not till a late period that any considerable number of hospitals were erected in Europe for the reception of lunatics. For the safety of the community they were to be confined; and when this object was attained, the duty of the magistrate and of the public in regard to them was supposed to be accomplished. If violent and dangerous, they were almost everywhere lodged in gaols; and even such as were placed in the lunatic hospitals of those days were loaded with chains, fetters, manacles, hobbles, gyves, and muzzles. They were flogged during their paroxysms, fastened naked in dark cells, in the most squalid and miserable condition; or they were exhibited for money in cages by their *keepers* (a term still retained), like wild beasts, or as objects of curiosity and ridicule. It was ignorantly supposed that lunatics are insensible to the ordinary causes of bodily pain, and this notion became a pretext for the barbarities that were exercised towards them.

The commencement of a more humane practice was made in France by the good St. Vincent de Paule, founder of the order of Lazarites, and originator of the Foundling Hospital of Paris. This ecclesiastic was one of the most zealous and active men of his age in all works of benevolence. He obtained benefactions for the hospitals of Bicêtre and the Salpetrière. In his exhortations he recommended, with great force and eloquence, kindness and gentleness towards the insane. From his time lunatics began to be admitted more frequently into hospitals instead of prisons.

In 1786, Ténon, a French physician, published an essay on the state of the insane, and on the method of treatment likely to promote their recovery. This attracted the attention of humane persons to the subject; and it was soon afterwards brought before the

the Constituent Assembly of France, in a very striking memoir, by La Rochefoucauld.

It was during the Reign of Terror, and while all France laboured under a new form of insanity, that the idea was first conceived of setting loose madmen from their bonds. The good and wise physician, Pinel, seems to have been struck with the injustice of keeping his patients chained in the dungeons of Bicêtre, while so many hundreds of his countrymen, more mischievously distracted than any of them, were at large to work the bloody frolics of the revolutionary phrenzy. There were at that time upwards of 300 maniacs chained in the loathsome cells of the horrible Bedlam of France. Pinel formed the resolution of setting them free from their strict restraint, and he entreated permission of the Commune to that effect. Struck with the novelty of the enterprise, at that time a sufficient recommendation before any assembly in France, the Commune listened to the proposal, and deputed one of their body, the notorious Couthon, to accompany the physician to the spot, and judge of the propriety of carrying his undertaking into effect. They were received by a confused noise—the yells and vociferations of some hundreds of madmen, mixed with the sounds of their clanking chains, echoing through the damp and dreary vaults of the prison. Couthon turned away with horror, but he permitted Pinel to pursue his enterprise. The philanthropist resolved speedily to liberate fifty of the number by way of experiment, and he began by unchaining twelve of the most violent. The account of his proceeding has been recorded by his nephew, Scipion Pinel, in a lively narrative, which was read before the Academy of Sciences. The first man set at liberty was an English captain. He had been forty years in chains, and his history was forgotten by himself and all the world. His keepers approached him with dread: he had killed one of their comrades by a blow with his manacles. Pinel entered his cell unattended, and accosted him in a kind and confiding manner, and told him that it was designed to give him the liberty of walking abroad, on condition that he would put on a waistcoat that might confine his arms. The madman appeared to disbelieve; but he obeyed. His chains were removed, and the door of his cell was left open. Many times he raised himself and fell back; his limbs gave way; they had been ironed forty years. At length he was able to stand, and to stalk to the door of his dark cell, and to gaze, with exclamations of wonder and delight, at the beautiful sky. He spent the day in the enjoyment of his newly-acquired privilege; he was no more in bonds; and during the two years of his further detention at Bicêtre, assisted in managing the house. The next man liberated was a soldier, a private in

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the French guards, who had been ten years in chains, and was an object of general fear. His case had been one of acute mania, occasioned by intemperance—a disorder which often subsides in a short period under abstinence from intoxicating drinks, unless kept up, as in this case, by improper treatment. When set at liberty, this man willingly assisted Pinel in breaking the chains of his fellow-prisoners: he became immediately calm, and even kind and attentive, and was ever afterwards the devoted friend of his deliverer. In an adjoining cell there were three Prussian soldiers, who had been many years in chains and darkness: through grief and despair they had sunk into a state of stupor and fatuity, the frequent result of similar treatment, and they refused to be removed. Near to them was an old priest, harmless and patient, who fancied himself to be the Saviour of the world. When taunted by his keepers, who used to tell him that, if he was Christ, he could break the heavy chains that loaded his hands, he replied, with solemn dignity, ‘*Frustrà tentâris Dominum tuum.*’ After his release he got rid of his illusion, and recovered the soundness of his mind. Within a few days Pinel liberated fifty-three maniacs from their imprisonment. The result was beyond his hopes. Tranquillity and harmony succeeded to tumult and disorder, and even the most ferocious madmen became more tractable. This took place in 1792; and the example of Pinel was followed in various parts of France.

In England some improvements began about the same period as in France; but they advanced more slowly, and only as the state of public opinion gradually forced them on. Asylums had been increased in number: private houses for the reception of insane persons were found to be profitable speculations, and accordingly multiplied; and asylums began to be established by public subscription for the accommodation of lunatics among the lower orders. It is most remarkable that the estimated numbers were at this time so small. The York Asylum was set on foot in 1772. A public advertisement, signed by Archbishop Drummond and twenty-four gentlemen, stated that—‘sensible of the deplorable situation of many poor lunatics in that extensive county, who had no other support than what a needy parent can bestow, or a thrifty parish officer provide, they recommend the erection of a public edifice for the reception of such unhappy people.’ An inquiry was then set on foot as to the number of lunatics in the Three Ridings, and it was found *so alarming* that it was determined to erect a building capable of receiving *fifty-four patients*, with power of extending it by means of wings. For the care of fifty-four patients, one head keeper, one matron, and three servants of each sex were thought sufficient.

It

It is remarkable that in 1813 the same number of attendants was thought sufficient for 200 patients. The explanation of this is the use of restraint and confinement in cells, that was the general practice in the York Asylum. For some time the establishment was inspected by regular visitors; and while this was done, and paupers alone were admitted, no complaints of improper treatment were heard; but when patients of a higher class were received, under the pretence of assisting the pauper establishment by larger payments, and the physician was allowed to take fees, abuses were introduced, the system of regular visiting was given up, and the York Asylum became the scene of most disgraceful disorder.

Not long after this several public hospitals were erected in different parts of the country. The Nottingham Asylum was built in 1791, the Glasgow Asylum in 1807. In 1808 the important Act for the erection of County Asylums opened a new era in the history of these establishments. It was by this Act that an adequate provision for the Lunatic Population of England was first projected. How far the object has yet been attained we shall have future occasion to show.

The commencement of improvements in the internal management of our lunatic asylums, and the actual treatment of their inmates, may be dated from the foundation of the Retreat by the Society of Friends. It is a curious coincidence that the origin of the Retreat was coëval with the liberation by Pinel of the lunatics of Bicêtre: the two events had no connection. The foundation of the Retreat was suggested by some complaints relative to a female belonging to the Society of Friends, who had been confined and died in York Asylum. It was opened in 1793, under the direction of the Tukes, of York, whose name will be handed down among those of the benefactors of mankind. The plan of treatment adopted from the first was that which humanity and common sense ought long before to have suggested. It was to manage the patients in the most gentle method, to soothe their feelings by kindness and compassion, and to gain their confidence by that mild control which firmness joined to gentleness and forbearance never fails to establish over the insane and the sane. The unostentatious accounts that were from time to time published of this institution made a strong impression on the public mind. It was well known that a different system was pursued in the old establishments, against which complaints had been continually gaining ground. In these places all things were as much as possible involved in mystery and concealment, and attempts to promote inquiry were resisted and resented as grievous affronts. The York Asylum, of which the management had fallen

fallen into a few hands, interested in the concealment and perpetuation of abuses, was more especially the object of complaint, and of comparison with the Retreat, situated in its immediate neighbourhood. Dr. Best, physician to the Asylum, published some severe strictures on Mr. Samuel Tuke's account of the Retreat, in which he supposed that unfavourable allusions had been made to the Asylum. The controversy attracted attention; and some gross instances of neglect and ill-treatment having fallen under the notice of Mr. Godfrey Higgins, an active magistrate of the West Riding, a movement was with great difficulty made, and an investigation was set on foot. Scarcely any kind of abuse or indecency can be imagined that was not shown to have been perpetrated in the York Asylum. This disclosure gave rise, in the following session, to a Parliamentary inquiry into the state of all the public lunatic asylums, and many of the private houses for the insane.

The state of Bethlehem (Bedlam) was on this occasion exposed. In that hospital it had been the ordinary practice to keep patients, male and female, even some who were but partially insane, and for the most part intelligent, chained constantly by arm and leg to the walls of apartments, with no clothing but a blanket. Others were found lying in cells on loose straw, covered merely with a rug, and in a most filthy and disgusting state. And this was twenty-three years after the reformation of Bicêtre by Pinel, and in the royal hospital of Great Britain. The case of Norris stands out conspicuously. Norris was a shrewd intelligent man, who retained to the last the powers of his understanding, but was subject to paroxysms of fury. He was dreaded as a most dangerous madman. Mr. Haslam, at that time apothecary of Bethlehem Hospital, advised his confinement in a well-secured double cell; but the Committee determined otherwise, and after long deliberation gave minute directions for the construction of an apparatus of iron, under the load of which the unfortunate man was destined to pass the remaining twelve years of his life. A stout iron ring was riveted round his neck, and connected by a short chain to another ring, which was made to slide up and down a massive iron pillar six feet high: a strong iron bar, two inches wide, was riveted round his body, on each side of which his arms were pinioned down close to his waist: his right leg was chained to the trough on which he was placed. Norris was not in a state fitted to render him insensible to such miseries. While fettered as above described he read a great many books on history and biography: he read the newspapers every day, and conversed sensibly on the events of the time.

St. Luke's Hospital was found in a better state than Bedlam: a similar

a similar method of management was there followed, but it was stated on evidence that there were not nearly so many persons '*under violent coercion.*' The naval maniacs at Hoxton were declared to be in a dirty miserable condition, without classification, and destitute of ordinary decencies and comforts.

This exposure produced a lasting impression. The fact having been demonstrated that a kind and gentle treatment may be advantageously substituted for harshness, a reformation of the old hospitals was carried into effect, and new asylums were set on foot, professedly on this principle. The managers of these establishments emulated each other in allowing more and more liberty to their patients, and in avoiding the use of severe and coercive measures. In county asylums, where adequate means of classification and employment were at hand, it was discovered, as soon as the experiment was made, that personal restraint may for the most part be dispensed with, if due vigilance is used to prevent accidents, and a sufficient number of attendants are at hand to overpower resistance when necessity requires. In proportion as restraint was discontinued it was observed that the inmates of lunatic hospitals became more tranquil, more cheerful, more disposed to give assistance to the superintendents, and less mischievous, irritable, and destructive. It was no longer impossible to cultivate gardens to which they had access, or to preserve glass-windows : these were no longer guarded with lattices, nor were the walls built so high to prevent escapes. In fact, moral principles were substituted in the government of these reformed asylums for physical force.\*

This change of system has been chiefly carried into effect in some of the large county asylums, where no motive of parsimony interfered to prevent the attainment of all the requisite conditions. These are principally ample airing grounds, with the means of active occupation, and a sufficient number of attendants. In many of the private asylums, however, and even in some of the public ones, as we shall hereafter show, the old method has continued in force, with unmitigated severity, down to the period of the late visitation by the Commissioners. A controversy exists among the superintendents of the best conducted county asylums on the question how far the principle of abstaining from the use of mechanical coercion—which they term technically the non-restraint system—ought to be carried. One party (at the head

\* Such is the statement given by Dr. Hitch, one of the most eminently successful among the superintendents of Lunatic Hospitals, and confirmed by the most intelligent of those who hold similar appointments. We have seen lunatics who had been ten or twenty years bound and coerced, and during that time irritable and violent, walking at large about the grounds of a lunatic asylum, having been restored to a state of perfect harmlessness and tranquillity on being released from their bonds.

of which is that accomplished physician Dr. Conolly) abjures the use of mechanical restraints in managing even the most violent and destructive maniacs. The substitute adopted for ligatures and chains, and strait-waistcoats, is solitary confinement in padded rooms, lined with some soft material, so that the patient can sustain no serious injury even if he dashes his head or body with violence against the walls. Some intelligent persons are, however, of opinion that solitary confinement is not in all instances preferable to slight restraint; and that patients who have mischievous propensities, and make constant efforts, as many do, to destroy their clothes or strip them off, suffer less, both in health and feelings, if allowed to walk at large in the open air with their hands fastened in muffs or gloves, than if kept shut up in cheerless cells. They argue also that padded rooms afford no security in some extreme cases—as when a lunatic, during a paroxysm, attempts to tear out his eyes, gnaw his flesh, or bite off his tongue. Such instances actually occur, and the Commissioners have seen persons deprived of sight, or otherwise maimed, who might easily have been prevented from inflicting upon themselves these calamities by mechanical restraints of no severe kind. Examples have occurred in which destructive patients have killed some of their companions during a sudden outbreak. It is argued, moreover, and no satisfactory reply has been made to the observation, that some have depraved appetites, and propensities perverted by disease, the indulgence of which is destructive, and can only be prevented by mechanical restraint, or by the constant presence of an attendant. On these and similar grounds many humane and considerate persons are still found to disapprove the total prohibition of all means of restraint. In this number we must reckon, in England, the enlightened founder of the Retreat, Mr. Samuel Tuke, who is rightly looked upon as the author of the improved system; and, on the Continent, Dr. Foville, the distinguished successor of Esquirol at the Royal Hospital of Charenton. With such arguments and such authorities on both sides of this question, it is difficult to come to a decided opinion as to the propriety of prohibiting in all cases the adoption of restraint. But one result seems established by the consent of all parties; viz., that the least possible use should be made of such means. If we rest on this as an undisputed principle, and take into our account the fact that in several of the largest and best-conducted asylums in Britain, though the superintendents do not profess to refuse, should a case occur requiring it, to make use of restraint, they have in reality not applied it in a single instance during several years, it will appear that there is practically little difference between the two parties. In the mean time

time it is to be hoped that the desire to maintain one rule of conduct, under all circumstances, may not occasion a relapse into the old system of confinement in dark cells. The instances on record, which prove the baneful tendency of solitary cellular confinement, as practised in the prisons of Pennsylvania, ought to be sufficient warning on this head.\*

A series of parliamentary enactments has resulted from these discussions, with a view to the improvement of public and private asylums, and to secure their periodical visitation by magistrates and commissioners. We shall enumerate the most important of these Acts in the order of their succession; but our readers will be better prepared to form an estimate of their value and bearing when they shall have accompanied us in taking a brief but general survey of the remarkable facts illustrative of the present state of lunatics and asylums in this country, which the late Report of the Metropolitan Commissioners has brought to light. The appointment of this Commission, or rather the extension of its sphere of operation beyond the limits of the metropolitan district, is well known to have been the last act of Government in connexion with the treatment of lunatics. The Report was alluded to in Parliament by Lord Ashley, in the luminous and excellent speech in which that nobleman drew the attention of the House, shortly before the close of the last session, to the subject of lunacy, and the existing provisions for the insane poor. It brings before the public a great mass of information, for the most part new, on all the most important topics connected with insanity.

The principal heads of the Report are a description of the different classes of lunatic asylums; their construction, state, and the system of management pursued in them; a view of the principal evils and defects existing in these establishments, as detected by the Commissioners in their late visitations; an account of the state in which pauper lunatics are admitted into asylums; of the forms and varieties of mental disease prevalent among their inmates; of the classification and treatment, medical and moral, to which they are subjected; of the degrees and kinds of restraint practised in the different houses; of the visitations and inspections which, according to law, ought to have been carried on; and of the manner in which these visitations have been actually practised in the different houses. The Report contains also remarks on a

\* On the baneful effects of this system of solitary confinement in cells in the penitentiaries of Pennsylvania, see the 'Compte rendu des Séances et Travaux de l'Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques.' This subject has been discussed at several meetings of the Institute during the present year, and it seems to be a result established beyond doubt, that a considerable number *per cent.* of cases of insanity are produced yearly in the Pennsylvanian penitentiaries.

variety of particulars connected with the state of the houses, which bear on great practical questions. To these details is added a copious digest of materials for the statistics of insanity in England, a subject of great national interest, and one on which there have existed hitherto no sources of correct information.

The total number of lunatic asylums in England and Wales is stated to be 166. Among these, 17 are county asylums, 11 are asylums supported partly by subscription, 1 is a military and 1 a naval hospital, and 136 are licensed houses or private asylums. Of these last, 99 are in the provinces, and licensed by magistrates; 37 are within the metropolitan district, and licensed by the Commissioners in Lunacy. Of the licensed houses, 44 receive paupers as well as private patients, and 92 private patients only.

It appears from the enumeration that although county magistrates have been empowered by the Act passed in 1808 (a power continued by 9 Geo. IV. c. 40) to erect county asylums wherever they thought fit, only 16 of 40 counties in England, and 1 of 12 in Wales, have been provided with such establishments. Neither has the recommendation of the Committee of the House of Commons in 1807, for the combination of counties with a view to the erection of joint asylums, been acted upon, with the exception of one instance, and that a comparatively unimportant one. It cannot be said that there has been no want of public asylums in the districts where none have been established.

The most erroneous notions have prevailed as to the numbers of the insane in this country, and in fact no sufficient data existed for drawing any conclusion on the subject. These are for the first time furnished by the Report of the Commissioners, and it appears that great care has been bestowed in collecting and arranging materials for the statistics of insanity. They form a most valuable public document. The following table gives the number of insane persons, of all classes, in England and Wales, on the 1st of January, 1844:—

Where confined.	PRIVATE PATIENTS.			PAUPERS.			TOTAL.		
	Male	Female	Total.	Male	Female	Total.	Male	Female	Total.
County Asylums . . . . .	130	115	245	1,924	2,931	4,155	2,054	2,346	4,400
Ditto, under Local Acts . . . . .		..	4	38	51	89	38	51	89
Military and Naval Hospitals . . . . .	164	..	168	..	..	..	164	4	168
Bethlem and St. Luke's Hospitals . . . . .	178	264	442	86	35	121	264	299	563
Other Public Asylums . . . . .	249	287	536	177	166	343	426	453	879
Licensed Houses:—									
"    Metropolitan . . . . .	520	453	973	300	494	854	880	947	1,827
"    Provincial . . . . .	748	678	1,426	947	973	1,920	1,695	1,651	3,346
*Workhouses and elsewhere . . . . .	..	..	4,169	5,170	9,339	4,169	5,170	9,339	
Single Patients under Commission . . . . .	172	110	282	..	..	..	172	110	282
Totals . . . . .	2,161	1,911	4,072	7,701	9,120	16,821	9,862	11,031	20,893

\* Including 30 Male and 3 Female Criminal Lunatics, in Gaols, according to the Parliamentary Return for April, 1843.

It appears that there are 20,893 persons in South Britain ascertained to be insane: 4072 are maintained either wholly or in part at their own cost, or that of their families; while 16,821 are objects of charity, and supported at the public expense. Besides these, there are large numbers of persons shut up and confined as single patients, of whom no account is given in any public document.

The following table displays some interesting facts. It shows that the proportion of pauper lunatics and idiots to the population is greater in Wales than in England, and that in both the number of females is greater than that of males:—

PROPORTIONS PER CENT. OF PAUPER LUNATICS TO POPULATION,  
JANUARY 1ST, 1844.

		Population.	Pauper Lunatics.	Proportion per cent.	One Pauper Lunatic to Persons Living.
England . . {	Males.....	7,589,659	7,159	.094	1,060
	Females ....	7,945,962	8,442	.106	942
	Total...	15,535,621	15,601	.100	1,000
Wales . . . {	Males.....	463,985	542	.117	856
	Females ....	480,476	678	.141	709
	Total .....	944,461	1,220	.129	775
Total England and Wales..		16,480,082	16,821	.102	980
Deduct Criminal Lunatics.....			279		
Total Pauper Lunatics not Criminals.....			16,542	.100	1,000

We discover, on inspecting the former of these tables, that the number of lunatics and idiots confined in workhouses and elsewhere is more than double of the total number of those in county lunatic asylums. It likewise appears that the number of paupers sent to private asylums is more than half as many as the number in county asylums. The evils resulting from this state of things will appear when we consider that most workhouses are in a great measure unprovided with those resources which are found to promote the recovery of the insane, and tend therefore to lighten the public burden of their maintenance, and take into the account the fact shown by the Report, that a great many of the licensed houses admitting paupers are scarcely better provided in this respect than workhouses. The following consideration will show how great a calamity to the country is this defect in the public provisions regarding lunacy.

Insanity is curable in a very large proportion of cases, but the cure is almost entirely dependent on the early application of remedial means. The table printed in page 189 of the Report will prove that the cures, during the last five years, have in four county asylums been 30, in four others 40, in four others 50, and in three 60 per cent. At St. Luke's the permanent cures, during 1842, are stated to be 70, and in 1843 to be 65 per cent. It must be observed that at St. Luke's scarcely any cases are admitted except recent ones, while the proportion of such admitted into some of the county asylums is comparatively small. In one county asylum, out of 37 cases admitted in 1842, only 6 were received within three months of the attack, and 5 of these recovered within three months: the rest, being old cases, were incurable. It is a fact long ago established by the Reports of lunatic hospitals in this and other countries, that the disorder is curable, in a very great proportion of cases, during the first year of the attack, and that recoveries after that period are comparatively rare. From a table drawn up by Mr. Tuke for the Retreat, on the accuracy of which we may place the utmost reliance, it appears that out of 63 cases admitted within three months of the attack, 51 recoveries took place; out of 65 cases admitted more than three but less than twelve months from the attack, there were 28 recoveries; in 101 cases admitted after the termination of the first year, only 31 recoveries are recorded.

When we take into consideration the great probability of recovery in the early stages of insanity—which, as we must not fail to observe, is restricted to cases placed under circumstances calculated to promote cure—and the almost total hopelessness of protracted cases, which is a fact fully established by the statistics of lunatic hospitals, we are forcibly impressed with the importance of some provisions that may ensure the removal of patients to properly constituted asylums as soon as possible after the onset of the disease. No such provisions are at present afforded by the laws of this country. Even where there are county asylums it is a constant complaint that, although the medical officers are ever calling the attention of magistrates to the importance of early admissions, the pauper lunatics are almost everywhere detained so long in workhouses that the chance of cure is rendered extremely small. Such has been the report given to the Commissioners in most of the county lunatic hospitals, and in very many of the private asylums which receive pauper patients.

We have observed that several of the asylums belonging to counties furnish great advantages for promoting the recovery of the patients consigned to them. The same observation is applicable

able to the public subscription asylums, and to some of the licensed houses admitting pauper patients. We must now proceed to notice the deplorable deficiencies which the Report of the Commissioners shows to exist in other receptacles for the insane. It will be hardly beyond the limit of ascertained truth if we should say that more than half of the pauper lunatics in this country are shut up in places calculated to protract their disorder and to render it hopeless, and to consign the unfortunate sufferers as a perpetual burden to the community. This remark applies with full force to the cells or small rooms in the ordinary workhouses, where so great a number of lunatics are detained. It applies to the confined and gloomy apartments in the Birmingham workhouse licensed for the reception of lunatics, and where not fewer than 71 insane or idiotic patients were seen by the Commissioners. The lunatic wards of St. Peter's Hospital at Bristol are liable to the same observation. But the worst instance of the kind, and one of the most flagrant examples of abuse detected by the Commissioners in their circuit through England and Wales, was the county asylum belonging to the town and county of Haverfordwest. The condition of the place was, indeed, scarcely better than that of Old Bedlam or the York Asylum, as displayed in the memorable investigation above related. It is, in fact, an old prison converted into a lunatic asylum without any proper alteration or repair. In the description given of this place in the Report, it is said to be

' Deficient in every comfort, and almost in every convenience ; the rooms being small and ill-ventilated, and some of them almost dark, and the interior of the building altogether out of repair. There was no seat, table, or article of furniture in the women's apartments, and nothing except a table in the men's room. The men were standing ; the women standing or sitting on the floor. There were large holes in some of the walls and ceilings. The airing-courts were very small and cheerless, particularly that belonging to the men, and they were both strewn with large stones, which had fallen or been forced from the building.'

' The dress of the patients was, in almost every instance, dirty, ragged, and insufficient. One of the female patients pulled off her shoes and stockings, which were nothing more than rags. The Commissioners were informed that there was not a single change of linen (either for the beds or for the person) throughout the asylum. There were only 16 single beds for the 18 patients confined in the asylum. One patient (a boy of 19) slept on loose straw, on the stone floor, in a small dark cell.'

' The Commissioners caused many of the beds to be uncovered, and found that there were no sheets or blankets, and little more than a single rug to cover the patients. The matron stated that she had applied repeatedly for more bed-clothes, and for linen, but without effect.'

' The refractory patients were confined in strong chairs, their arms being

being also fastened to the chair. Two were thus confined, separately, in small rooms, into which scarcely any light entered through the gratings. One was the boy before mentioned, who slept at night on the floor of the same room ; the other was a woman, who was entirely naked on both the days on which the Commissioners visited the asylum, and, without doubt, during the whole of the intermediate night. Both of these were dirty patients. In the woman's room the stench was so offensive that it was scarcely possible to remain there.

' During wet weather there was no place whatever for exercise ; and at other times there was not sufficient space for the purpose. No attempt was made to employ any of the patients, and no books or other amusements were provided. Prayers were never read, and no clergyman ever visited the asylum, although one of the female patients, who was occasionally depressed, and imagined that she had not done her duty to a child who had died, appeared especially to require such consolation as a clergyman might afford.'

Among the facts stated in the Report, none has excited so much surprise as the condition in which the Commissioners have found a large number of asylums licensed by the magistrates. It is asserted that not only irregularities and abuses, but cruelties of a very flagrant character have been observed in many of these establishments. The observation refers to asylums of that class which admit pauper patients. In several of these licensed houses, it is stated that the treatment of the patients is harsh and cruel, and calculated to destroy their bodily health and aggravate their mental disorder. One licensed house, that at Box, near Bath, had been described before a Committee of the House of Commons in 1815, as being in a very similar state to that in which it was found by the Commissioners in 1843 and 1844. Many other licensed houses are described as being very defective in their accommodations, and very unfit for the reception of lunatics. They are a disgrace to the country in which they exist. The following passages, extracted from the Report, seem fully to bear out these remarks :—

' The asylums at West Auckland, and at Wreckenton, in the county of Durham, are reported to be wholly unfit for the care of insane persons.

' At West Auckland, in the small cheerless day-room of the males, with only one window, and that unglazed, five men were restrained by leg-locks, called hobbles, and two were wearing in addition iron handcuffs, and fetters from the wrist to the ankle. They were all tranquil. The reason assigned for this coercion was, that without it they would escape. One powerful young man who had broken his fetters was heavily ironed, and another was leg-locked and handcuffed, who was under medical treatment and in a weak state. One woman was leg-locked by day, and chained to her bed at night. Chains were fastened to the floors in

many

many places, and to many of the bedsteads. The males throughout the house slept two in one bed.\*

‘At the licensed house at Derby, first visited on the 21st of October, 1842, the straw in the paupers’ beds was found filthy, and some of the bedding was in a disgusting condition from running sores, and was of the worst materials, and insufficient. Two cells, in which three sick epileptic paupers slept, were damp, unhealthy, and unfit for habitation. The beds of some of the private patients were in an equally bad state. Nearly all the provisions of the law were violated. A lady was found confined in this house, who was represented to be a visitor, and not a patient; but who, upon investigation, was proved to have been brought from another lunatic asylum, where she was a certified patient. Her name was entered in the private account book of the proprietor as a patient, and he had given a certificate that she was confined in his asylum, for the purpose of authorising her trustee to pay over to her husband dividends to which she was entitled, only a few days previously to the visit of the Commissioners. The magistrates of the borough, who are its visiting justices, had not visited the house for the space of a year, minus eight days. This lady had been, during the whole of her residence in this place, from the month of May until October, anxious to see some magistrate, with a view to demand her liberty. She was afterwards liberated upon our remonstrances.

‘At Box, near Bath,’ the Report states, ‘there being only one day-room and one airing-court for each sex, the noisy, violent, refractory, dirty, and dangerous patients, were crowded together in the same small space with those who were clean, convalescent, and quiet, and the noise and confusion were extreme. There were seven females under restraint; two had strait-waistcoats, two had their arms fixed in iron frames, not allowing the freedom of hand-locks; and three had iron leg-locks; one female was chained by her legs to a wooden seat in a paved passage, to prevent her, as it was stated, hurting herself in her fits. Eight or ten of the females were fastened by straps and chains to their beds at night. One male was chained by his leg to a seat in the yard, and another male was chained to his bed at night. At our last visit on the 24th of April, 1844, a trifling enlargement had been made in the yards, one of which was covered with macadamized stones, but the house was in the same unsatisfactory state, and the same harsh and cruel system of restraint was in practice.’

With respect to the asylum at Plympton in Devonshire, the Commissioners state that—

‘At the third visit to this house, on October 2, 1843, three women were found chained by their legs to the benches. One of them, mentioned in the previous Report, had, besides the chain to her leg, another chain

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\* The magistrates visited this place the same day on which it was visited by the Commissioners, and made the following entry in the Visitors’ Book:—

‘5th Dec. 1842.

‘We this day visited the Asylum, and found that the Commissioners had just left it. We found every thing in good order.’

passing

passing round her waist, to which were fixed, by an iron ring, two handlocks, in which both her hands were confined. Besides this restraint, there were twenty-one patients who were chained to their beds at night : two of these were private patients, and the others were male and female paupers. The three sleeping-rooms in the women's cottage could not, in the judgment of the Commissioners, have been cleaned for some days ; the wooden cribs were filthy ; the floor was in holes, and soaked with filth, and in parts covered with dirty straw. In a crib in one of these wretched places, a female private patient, who was cleanly, had been compelled to sleep. She implored us only to remove her to a better part of the house.

' In one of the cells in the upper court for the women, the dimensions of which were eight feet by four, and in which there was no table, and only two wooden seats fastened to the wall, we found three females confined. There was no glazing to the window, and the floor was perfectly wet. Two dark cells, which adjoin the cell used for a day-room, are the sleeping-places for these three unfortunate beings. Two of them sleep in two cribs in one cell. The floor in the cell with the two cribs was actually reeking wet, and covered with straw and filth ; and one crib had a piece of old carpet by way of bedding, besides the straw, but the other appeared to have had nothing but straw, without any other bedding. In the other cell the patient who slept in it had broken her crib to pieces, and a part of it was remaining in the cell ; but the straw was heaped up in one corner, and, as far as we could rely upon what was said, she had slept upon the straw upon the ground at least one night. The straw itself was wet and filthy.

' The whole of these cells were as damp and dark as an underground cellar ; it was scarcely possible to endure the offensive smell. We sent for a candle and lantern to enable us to examine them.

' So far from any good having resulted from the previous remonstrances of the Commissioners, the house was found, at this third visit, even in a worse condition than at the previous visits.'

We have selected a few instances of the abuses still existing in the lunatic asylums of this highly civilized country ; and we must now turn to another chapter in the history of similar cruelties exercised on the most unfortunate of our species by those whose especial duty it is to alleviate their calamities. One circumstance which in a peculiar manner aggravates the hardships of insanity, and demands for its victims more than ordinary protection from the legislature, is, that it dries up the springs of human sympathy and natural affection, and renders man an object of disgust to his fellow-men. It was well observed by the noble philanthropist who has devoted his time and labour to the mitigation of human sufferings, that insanity appears to be a visitation of Providence so overwhelming as to produce a withering and deadening effect upon the mind not only of the unhappy patient himself, but of all those who are connected with him ; that it  
renders

renders his nearest relatives anxious not only to get rid of the insane, but to wipe out, if possible, all traces of his memory.\* The influence of this tendency is to be recognised in cruelties which have been inflicted, not only in asylums, or under the mercenary care of strangers in private dwellings, but under the roof of parents. Of these abuses it will be necessary to give some instances in order to furnish our readers with a tolerably complete view of the insecurity in which our laws still leave the lunatic.

On the 18th day of May, 1844, Harriet Eleanor Pelham was brought up before one of the metropolitan magistrates, accused of gross cruelty towards her son, a lunatic, who was entitled to a dividend of 6000*l.* This was received by the mother. An inspector of police stated that on entering the house at Chelsea the most revolting scene that had ever come within his view, during a very lengthened experience, burst upon him. On a small straw bed lay a poor creature of the male sex, without one morsel of clothing more than an old and filthy rag which might be termed a shirt, and a small piece of flannel or blanket. Beneath him was a hole rotted through the dank straw of the bed (we need not say *how*), and maggots and loathsome vermin of every description were crawling on his body, which was so obscured by filth that it was almost difficult to discover in him a human being. His beard reached nearly down to his middle, and his nails protruded some inches beyond his toes. This was a son under the roof of his mother!

On the 28th day of November, 1843, Anne A. was sent from near Brecon, in Wales, to an asylum at Hereford, where she died on the 30th of January, 1844. She was in so shocking a state that the proprietor wished not to receive her. She had been kept chained upwards of eleven years, sometimes to the fire-place, and sometimes to a post; and, from her being fastened in a crouching posture, her knees were forced up to her chin, she sat wholly upon her heels and her hips, and much excoriation had taken place where her knees pressed upon her stomach. When she died it required considerable dissection to get her corpse pressed into a coffin.

On the 12th of January, 1843, the Lord Chancellor of Ireland (in *Re Spread*, a lunatic) said—

‘ I could hardly have believed that such an outrage on humanity as is disclosed by the affidavits could have been perpetrated at the present day. A gentleman of a highly respectable family, who is afflicted with insanity, was put under the care of a committee of his person. Afterwards one of his brothers was appointed committee, and he placed the lunatic in a house in Cork. He was found in an out-house belonging to

\* Lord Ashley's speech in the House of Commons, on the Lunacy Bill, in 1842.

the man with whom he had been placed ; and from the state of the roof there was access for the weather and the rain ; and though it was in the latter part of the year, he was stark naked, his legs chained and clenched together, and fastened by a chain not more than two feet in length, without even straw, and not able on account of his chains to lie down in such a way as to rest himself, and without power to move beyond the limit of the narrow circle which the chain would describe. I have felt bound to have the case fully investigated and exposed, because I am afraid the evil exists to a considerable extent.'

In 1841 a commission was taken out by Dr. Burman of Henley to inquire into the insanity of a patient who had been sent to him by his brother in 1805. The lunatic's property amounted to more than 460*l.* a-year. Only 120*l.* a-year was allowed for the lunatic's maintenance, which was not paid. The brother presented himself to a living belonging to the lunatic ; sold his commission in the army ; cut down his timber, mortgaged and sold part of his property, received the proceeds, and died insolvent.

Such is the manner in which, in the years 1843 and 1844, lunatics have been treated by a mother, a sister, and brothers in England, Wales, and Ireland. The highest legal authority in Ireland has stated that he believes that the evil exists to a considerable extent in that country ; and we have no doubt that it exists to a great extent both in England and in Wales.

Sir James Graham has stated in the House of Commons that the condition of pauper lunatics shall be taken into consideration in the next Session of Parliament ; and he is reported to have said :

'With respect to the detention of single lunatics by their friends in private dwellings, it was only necessary for him to remind the House of the caution necessary to be exercised in this respect, as the rights of relatives in these matters deserved some consideration.'

We hope the condition of all lunatics, without exception, will be considered ; and that nothing will be allowed to find shelter beneath the cloak of affectionate relationship. It is not necessary, in providing protection for these unfortunates, to invade the privacy of domestic life, or to add publicity to the pangs of those who kindly and properly take charge of their afflicted relatives ; but for the purpose of putting an end to outrages such as we, with Sir E. Sugden, believe now to exist to a very great extent, we would make it severely penal to detain any single lunatic without giving immediate notice to the Lord Chancellor, or to the Commissioners in Lunacy ; and we would, if the Commissioners are not to visit such persons, require that the medical attendant of the family should certify from time to time that the lunatic is properly treated. It suffices not that we enforce a mild and humane system of treating the insane in our public and private institutions, if we admit the

rights

rights of relatives to keep their lunatic kinsmen in a worse condition than brutes, and to chain and cripple their limbs, and deprive them of their property, in private dwellings.

It is no easy task to suggest a remedy for these evils, or any means of effectually preventing their perpetration. So long as concealment is possible they will exist. It was some time since observed by Mr. Samuel Tuke, who is known during a great part of his life to have devoted his attention to this subject, and whose strong sense is conspicuous in all his writings, that no system of visitation by local guardians or overseers, or even by magistrates, can be fully relied upon; and it is remarkable that the plan which he recommended seems to be almost an anticipation of the Metropolitan Commission, with extended powers. We shall cite his words:—

‘ I do not hesitate to say that it is a most imperfect and unsatisfactory system of visitation [he is alluding to the visits of local magistrates]—as I know that it is felt to be by some who act under it. We shall not, I apprehend, secure efficient visitation until we have an appointment of a number of competent persons to visit, under the authority of Government, all places of whatever description, private or public, chartered or unchartered, in which the insane are confined—to compare the degrees of human misery in these abodes—to ascertain how it may be most effectually provided for and alleviated—to collect information under uniform heads from all these institutions, and to report annually to the public the result of their observations and inquiries.’

Nothing can be more obvious to every person who considers the real state of the insane, than that the laws which regard the protection of lunatics require an entire remodelling on a principle very different from those which have directed former acts of the legislature of this country. The subject, as we have before remarked, is to be brought before Parliament in the ensuing Session, and we shall do an acceptable service to some of our readers by setting before them a brief recapitulation of the principal measures which hitherto have been adopted with reference to the object alluded to.

No provision had been made for the regulation of lunatic asylums in this country till the Act of 14 Geo. III. c. 49.

In 1763 a Committee of the House of Commons reported that it was the constant practice of husbands and of mothers to shut up their wives and daughters in the madhouses near London, without any proof of their insanity, and that the superintendent of one such house avowed the fact, and declared that he was in the practice of shutting up any person who was brought to him. He declared that during six years not one of the persons brought to him and admitted into his madhouse was really a lunatic.

Notwithstanding

Notwithstanding the notoriety of these abuses, it seems that no remedial measure was introduced until 1773, when a bill was brought in by Mr. J. Townshend, the Chairman of the Committee of 1763. This passed the Commons, but was rejected by the Lords. It, however, became law in 1774, under the title of 'An Act for Regulating Madhouses.'

In the year 1807, at the instigation of Mr. Wynn, a Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to inquire into the state of lunatics. From the evidence of Sir G. O. Paul, it appeared that pauper lunatics 'were then chained in the cellar or garret of a workhouse, fastened to the leg of a table, tied to a post in an out-house, or shut up in an uninhabited ruin, or left to ramble half-naked, and half-starved, the jest of the vulgar, ignorant, and unfeeling.' The Act of 48 Geo. III., first establishing county asylums, was introduced by Mr. Wynn upon the Report of this Committee. In the years 1812, 1815, and 1816, other Committees were appointed to consider provisions for the better regulation of madhouses, and in these years were disclosed those hateful and foul abominations perpetrated in the public asylums of York and Bethlehem, and in various private madhouses. Sir Vicary Gibbs had given an opinion that, however disgracefully a proprietor conducted a house, he could demand a licence under the Act of 1774, that there was no power to refuse it, and that the Act did not extend to hospitals such as York and Bethlehem, or to paupers.

Notwithstanding the mass of evidence published by Parliament in 1815 and 1816, nothing was done by the legislature towards providing a remedy. Several bills were introduced in the Commons, but were rejected in the Lords. In 1827 a Committee of the House of Commons was again appointed upon the earnest intercession of Mr. Robert Gordon, Lord Robert Seymour, and Lord Granville Somerset, to inquire into the state of pauper lunatics. Mr. Gordon, on the 19th of February, 1828, brought such a statement before the House, respecting Bethnal Green, that he and Lord Ashley, after much opposition from the lunatic hospitals at Exeter and Oxford, were enabled to carry the Act of the 9th Geo. IV. c. 41, to regulate the cure and treatment of insane persons in England and Wales. This Act repealed the Act of 1774; established the discretionary power of licensing houses for the reception of the insane, and the present system of visitation, and of requiring proper medical certificates and orders for the admission of patients; and first introduced the power of liberation.

These were only temporary acts, and their renewal was postponed to so late a period of the Session of 1842, that all the receptacles

receptacles for the insane throughout the kingdom were on the point of being wholly left to the tender care of their proprietors, without any visitation whatever. Lord Ashley urged the House to continue these Acts for three years, and to extend the visits of the Metropolitan Commissioners to the whole of England and Wales. Mr. Wakley said, ‘It is heart-rending to contemplate the sufferings of the miserable lunatics who are incarcerated within the walls of places of confinement appropriated to the reception of the insane. For the last fifteen years no improvement has taken place.’

Sir G. O. Paul, in 1807, thought that there was a ‘ministerial insensibility’ as to the condition of the insane. Whatever has hitherto been accomplished for the improvement of their personal treatment has been obtained by the persevering efforts of individuals—never, that we are aware of, with the assistance of Ministers, and generally in opposition to them. Mr. Townshend, after ten years’ efforts, procured the Act of 1774; and Mr. C. Wynn introduced, in 1808, the first Act which established county asylums. Mr. Robert Gordon and Lord Ashley, with the assistance of Lord Robert Grosvenor and Lord Granville Somerset, and a few others, after repeated Parliamentary inquiries, and the repeated rejection of various measures, at length induced the two Houses to pass, in the year 1828, the Act of the 9th Geo. IV., for Regulating Private Lunatic Asylums.

We have given these details for the purpose of convincing Lord Ashley and Mr. Gordon that, if any really adequate measure is to be carried, it must be by their own personal exertions, aided by all the assistance they can obtain from other humane and benevolent individuals. It is, however, of good omen that Lord Granville Somerset is now in the Cabinet.

The condition of criminal and dangerous lunatics during confinement, and under trial, is a subject which deserves particular attention. It was recommended by the Committee of the House of Commons, in 1807, ‘that a building should be erected for the separate confinement of all persons detained for offences committed during a state of insanity.’ At that period they were generally confined in gaols, and great evils resulted from the practice;—for example, ‘Aaron Bywater, a lunatic confined in the gaol for the county of Montgomery, was allowed, during an apparently lucid interval, to escape out of the gaoler’s sight, and murder one of his fellow prisoners.’\* The confinement of maniacs who have perpetrated atrocious deeds, and are dangerous in asylums destined for harmless lunatics, is felt by the proprietors of establishments, and by the insane themselves, to be a serious hard-

\* Report of House of Commons, 1807.

ship. At the Chester County Asylum a maniac is now confined, amongst the ordinary paupers, who has committed murder, and is so desperate that he is always chained. The proprietor of the private house at Nunkeeling applied to the magistrates of the county, and to the Secretary of State, without effect, for the removal from his house of a man who has escaped three times, and had twice nearly succeeded in killing his keepers, and once in setting fire to the asylum. At a small establishment in Norwich is one man who has murdered his wife, and another who has murdered his wife and child ; and the magistrates are apprehensive that the man who was tried at the last assizes for murdering his four children will be sent to the county asylum. There are now 257 criminal lunatics in the kingdom ; and the schedule in the Report discloses a catalogue of frightful offences which have been committed by them. The Commissioners recommend the erection of a separate establishment by the Government for these dangerous and formidable persons, who require a control which is severe and quite unnecessary for other lunatics.

The practice pursued in courts of justice in the trial of persons accused of atrocious crimes, when a plea of insanity has been set up in the defence, has excited great alarm, and has given rise to many inquiries difficult of solution. An appeal was made to the opinions of medical men as to the existence of unsound mind. Ray, in his work on medical jurisprudence, has observed that an enlightened and conscientious jury, when required to decide in a case of doubtful insanity, which is to determine the fate of a fellow-being, fully alive to the delicacy and responsibility of their situation, and their own incompetence unaided by the counsels of others, will be satisfied with nothing less than the opinion of those who have possessed unusual opportunities for studying the character and conduct of the insane, and have the qualities of mind necessary to enable them to profit by their observations. If they are obliged to decide on professional subjects, it would seem but just, and the dictate of common sense, that they should have the benefit of the best professional advice. This, however, they do not always obtain, and consequently the ends of justice are too often defeated by the assumptions of ignorance and vanity. The extraordinary medical evidence that was given upon M'Naghten's trial has made a strong impression upon the members of the medical and legal professions. Apothecaries and surgeons, without experience in insanity, volunteered their evidence ; and physicians and proprietors of lunatic asylums—*who had never seen the man until after he knew he was to be tried for his life*—were allowed to give evidence which excited the greatest surprise. Ray has remarked that, instead of the unqualified and irresponsible

irresponsible witnesses now too often brought forward to enlighten the minds of jurymen on medical subjects, it would be far better if there were a class of men more or less like the '*experts*' of the French, peculiarly fitted for the duty by a course of studies expressly directed to this end. It is indeed apparent to every one conversant with insanity and jurisprudence, that witnesses are frequently examined, on trials of great public importance and difficulty, who are unqualified to give an opinion upon the case. The misfortune in these cases is, that witnesses are summoned by parties on both sides expressly to further the views of those by whom they are employed; and the jury, unprepared for such discrimination, are called upon to decide a professional and scientific question of a most delicate nature, and involving the highest interests of society.

The mode of treating criminals after they have been convicted, where the plea of insanity has been set up, is also extremely perplexing and unsatisfactory, not only to professional persons, but to the public at large. A person was accused and convicted, in the present year, of the commission of an act which excited the deepest horror throughout the kingdom. A mission of medical men, the proprietors of private lunatic asylums, was deputed to visit *the convict*, and on their report his sentence was set aside. Pardon is properly in the discretion of the sovereign, but defence is matter of evidence and of law; and the public anxiously inquire what was the evidence, that they may judge of the law. Missions of this kind should consist of authorized persons, sworn before a judge, and their evidence should be made public.

In the Report of the Select Committee of 1807 there are some excellent remarks of Sir G. O. Paul upon the manner in which criminal lunatics should be dealt with:—‘Although it is palpably unjust to punish those who are irresponsible, we cannot altogether throw out of our consideration that the penalties of the law have other objects besides the mere punishment of offenders—the protection of society by the prevention of offence.’ Sir G. O. Paul says,—‘I am myself disposed to think that a degree of punishment following the acts of violence of a lunatic, may tend to prevent such acts being committed by them.’ There are many other humane persons who think that in some of these cases example would have great effect in preventing violence. The knowledge of the fact that there existed a place of confinement for those lunatics who have perpetrated atrocious acts would doubtless have a beneficial operation in preventing similar attempts, even over really insane persons, since lunatics are by no means beyond the influence of motives, or of the apprehension of punishment.

In the existing regulations for liberating dangerous lunatics there are some palpable anomalies. A lunatic, however dangerous he may be, unless he had been found to be insane by inquisition, may be set at large by his friends; and even if a pauper, he may be liberated, unless confined in a county asylum. An extraordinary case of the liberation of a lunatic by magistrates is mentioned in the Report. A man had been long addicted to intoxication, and for some months had scarcely ever been sober. During his intoxication he had frequently declared that he would kill his wife, who he thought had been unfaithful, and a child of which he said he was not the father. Delirium tremens is the common result of a series of drunken excesses; and there are numerous instances reported of maniacs *à potu* murdering their wives and children, and other persons, and extremely nice points of law have been raised upon the responsibility of these maniacs. John Brisdell and William M'Donough were both tried for murdering their wives under paroxysms of insanity brought on by drinking. The wife of the lunatic mentioned in the Report, two of whose brothers had died insane, was under the greatest apprehension of his murdering her and her child. Notwithstanding these facts, and the remonstrances of the proprietor of the asylum, the visiting magistrates liberated this man—an act for which they were not legally empowered, unless in Quarter Sessions.

The power of liberating insane persons was first granted under Mr. Robert Gordon's Act in 1828, and it appears from the evidence of Dr. Powell, that of two women who were first set at liberty under the Act, one hanged, and the other drowned herself. A power to liberate ought to exist; but its exercise requires matured experience and severe caution. The remarks and suggestions in the Report upon the liberation of lunatics are evidently the result of great care and experience.

Great misunderstanding exists among persons not conversant with the insane, on the question what lunatics are really to be deemed dangerous. It is often assumed that persons who have delusions or insane propensities, neither apparently threatening nor interfering with the lives or property of others, are entitled to be considered harmless. An inquisition was held last year before Mr. Commissioner Winslow, upon a young gentleman of fortune, and of mild manners, whose insane propensity was connected with windmills. He would go any distance to see a windmill, and would sit watching one for days together. He was removed by his friends to a place where there were no mills, in the hope that the strange propensity would wear away. The youth, however, formed the resolution to commit murder, in the hope that he should be removed as a punishment to some place

place where there would be a mill, and he accordingly got a child into a wood, and in attempting to murder it, cut and mangled its limbs with a knife in a horrible manner. No mad propensity could apparently be less likely to lead to consequences dangerous to the lives of others than the fondness of this young gentleman for windmills. Much caution and observation are necessary, before it can be pronounced that any insane delusion will not render a lunatic dangerous.

Among the subjects noticed in the Report, none have, we believe, created greater surprise than the *extraordinary privilege* possessed by certain asylums—and the extremely unprotected state of the property of lunatics, who have *not* been found lunatics under commissions issued by the Lord Chancellor.\*

The medical or other officers of the asylums of Exeter, Oxford, Northampton, Lincoln, York, and others of the same class, which receive large numbers of patients who pay very highly for their care, are allowed by law to confine persons without any certificate of insanity, or any written order. These asylums are also exempted from all visitation. Both exemptions are, we believe, entirely attributable to the medical officers and others connected with the two asylums at Exeter and Oxford.

Upon the renewal of Mr. Gordon's Bill in 1832, the persons connected with these two institutions opposed it, and procured the omission of the clause which previously subjected them to the general law as to admission. A pauper cannot be sent to a county asylum without previous certificates of his insanity; and yet ladies and gentlemen, paying highly for their board, may be shut up in these asylums without any proof of insanity, and without any written or other authority whatever.

We can understand why medical officers attached to an asylum are jealous of visitations from other medical persons living in their own neighbourhood; but we cannot comprehend the motives which induce the benevolent and humane patrons and supporters of these charities, to withdraw them from those regulations which have been found necessary to secure the insane from abuse, and to protect the sane from improper and illegal confinement. It is understood to be the opinion of the medical officers of nearly all the other public asylums, except those of Exeter and Oxford, that they should be subject to the same laws that govern other asylums, save only that their visitors should not be medical men living in their immediate vicinity. The founders and supporters of that admirable institution, the Retreat, near York, have always in

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\* A particular provision has been made in favour of lunatics under similar circumstances by the new French law on Lunacy. See 'Projet de Loi sur les Aliénés,' &c. Jan. 1838.

their evidence before Parliament, and on other occasions, expressed an opinion in favour of public visitation to every asylum for the insane, ‘whether public or private, chartered or not chartered.’

We have already noticed the wretched condition of lunatics whose persons have been left to the uncontrolled care of their own kindred. The Report produces numerous instances in which these unfortunate beings have been deprived of their property by their own relatives while they have been in confinement; and they have thus become paupers and burdens upon the public, or on the bounty of those under whose care they have been placed. Great improvements have lately taken place with respect to that class of lunatics who have been declared to be of unsound mind by a jury, and are more especially, on account of the nature or extent of their property, under the protection of the Lord Chancellor. By an Act introduced by Lord Brougham, and passed in 1833, two physicians are appointed to visit every person found a lunatic by inquisition, at least once in every year, and to report upon his state of mind and bodily health, and his general condition, care, and treatment. These visitors also ascertain whether every lunatic has those comforts which are suited to his property, and the allowance made for him. Until 1842, inquisitions to inquire into the state of mind of persons alleged to be insane, were taken before three commissioners, who were different in each case, and were barristers and solicitors. If a person was declared to be of unsound mind upon an inquisition, all subsequent inquiries as to his care and the management of his property were referred to one of the ten Masters in Chancery, and each proceeding was to be confirmed by the Lord Chancellor. Inquiries held upon commissions so constituted were unsatisfactory, and the subsequent proceedings were expensive and dilatory. In 1842, Lord Lyndhurst introduced an Act which appointed two permanent Commissioners in Lunacy. One of these Commissioners presides at all inquiries in England and Wales, and personally ascertains the condition of each lunatic, the fitness of the individual who is to have the care of him, and the extent of his property; and the two Commissioners superintend the management of the estates, audit the accounts of the lunatics, and learn from the medical visitors whether or not they have proper care and attention. There are 535 lunatics under the care of the Lord Chancellor:—the value of the property belonging to them is upwards of a million; the annual income has been reported to Parliament to be 356,711*l.* 17*s.* 11*d.*—and the annual sum allowed for their maintenance to be 161,151*l.* 12*s.* These circumstances alone show the importance of a permanent commission; and we believe that, as well on account of the care of the lunatics themselves, and their property, as of the great saving

saving of expense to parties, few legal changes have given more universal satisfaction than this measure of Lord Lyndhurst. But there are upwards of 4000 lunatics confined as private patients in England, who are *not* under the care of the Lord Chancellor; and as the person and property of every individual lunatic is placed by express authority from the Crown under his charge, we think that the estates of these lunatics should not be left to the absolute control of their relatives. Although it must be quite unnecessary to hold commissions in the case of every one of these 4000 lunatics, still some intermediate inquiry and protection, as suggested by the Report, appears to be urgently called for.

It appears from the Reports of Committees that there were in the metropolitan district, in 1807, 17, and in 1815, 24, and in the provinces in 1807, 28, and in 1815, 38 *licensed houses* for the reception of the insane. The Report of 1815 notices that 'no returns had ever been received from any part of Wales.' There are now in the metropolitan district 37, and in the provinces 99, making together 136 licensed houses. The Reports of 1815 and 1827 contain accounts of abuses and cruelties of the grossest character in the houses then licensed. Although the county and large public asylums, and the better classes of licensed houses for private patients, are in general well conducted, it is manifest from the present Report, that, with few exceptions, the *licensed* receptacles for the insane poor are, notwithstanding the visitation to which they have been subjected from the year 1828, now wanting in almost everything that is essential to preserve the bodily health of their patients, and quite unfit for the relief or cure of mental diseases,—nay, that the system of treatment in many of them is at this day wantonly cruel. When we consider the numbers of the lunatics in these disgraceful establishments, the forlorn condition of the insane poor in those numerous counties which have provided no proper receptacles for them, the state of those counties which, having erected asylums, have permitted them, from being crowded with incurable cases, to become almost useless for the purposes of cure, and the very large expenditure at which county asylums have hitherto been erected and conducted, we feel confident that these and other matters which have been submitted by the Commissioners to the consideration of the Lord Chancellor must henceforth cease to be subjects of interest for a few private philanthropists alone. The comments of the Commissioners have, as might be expected, given offence to a few individual magistrates. We trust that the country and Parliament will disregard all inferior considerations, and will calmly and seriously contemplate the importance and magnitude of the subject which has been submitted to them.

Asylums are filled with the wrecks of human intellect, and of the dignity and happiness of man. Those whom rank, and wealth, and grace, and loveliness, and almost every gift of fortune had apparently formed for happiness and delight, here seek at best a sad shelter from the storms and agitations that have made shipwreck of their noblest endowment. Many whose gallant acts have exalted their names, whose genius has illuminated the age in which they lived, whose writings have cheered and improved mankind, are found in these abodes. Let those who boast of ‘man, so noble in reason, so infinite in faculties, in form and movement so express and admirable,’ visit him in these receptacles of his desolation.

The disorders which deprive men of their reason and self-governing power, and render it a matter of necessity that they should be separated from society, are many and various; and it is a mistake to suppose that they can be described in a single definition, or with accuracy included under one name. A few pages in the Report are devoted to the description of these different trains of phenomena, which are, however, so briefly characterized that some persons have expressed disappointment who remember the treasures of knowledge which Esquirol collected from the limited ground of two or three asylums in France. It has been said that, with so ample a field of observation before them as all the public and private asylums in England have opened to the view of the Commissioners, a rich store of facts and inductions might have been expected for the extension of pathology and the history of mental disorders. It must be remembered that this document is a Report addressed to the Lord Chancellor, and that it is designed, not for the augmentation of science, but for practical and legal purposes—in short to present such a view of the actual condition of lunatics as may enable Parliament and the public to determine what alterations are called for in the existing provisions. We are, however, enabled to collect, from a section of the Report relative to the forms of mental disease, that nearly the same disorders of the understanding prevail in England as those which have long ago been recognised in foreign countries, and that they are found nearly in the same proportions, and produced by similar causes.

It is a matter of complaint in most of the large asylums that so great a proportion of space is occupied by cases of *dementia*. *Dementia* is not insanity properly so termed. It is the hopeless result of insanity; that final obliteration of the faculties which ensues on a long continued excitement of disordered feelings and disturbed processes of thought. To the head of *mania* and its sequel *dementia* may be referred two-thirds, and often three-fourths,

fourths, of the cases in the great lunatic asylums. The instances of partial madness, whether included under *monomania* or *moral insanity*, are much less numerous. Insane persons have disordered intellects; but the demented, using the term in the technical sense, have no intellect at all. They are the mere outward shapes of men—moving bodies without minds. In the large hospital of Bicêtre a hundred such objects crowd round a stranger who happens to visit the place, and gazing at him with a vacant, unmeaning stare, remind him of bodies half re-animated from the grave. Physical activity in many of these instances survives the loss of intellect, and assumes the appearance of trick or habit. Some jump or run to and fro, or walk round perpetually in a circle. Some dance or sing; many talk incessantly in the most incoherent jargon, muttering half sentences and broken expressions, in which it is scarcely possible to discover any glimpse of meaning. Many sit in silence with a sedate and tranquil look, or a vacant smile, and scarcely pronounce a syllable for weeks or months, or even for years. In the last stage they become scarcely conscious of existence; unable to perform the commonest animal functions—even to eat, if food is not put into their mouths. Dementia, when it reaches the degree of complete fatuity, is often complicated with paralysis in some modification. How strange that great numbers of persons reduced to the state above described, or to one approaching to it, should be found to occupy, in nearly all the large asylums of this country, a great part of the space which ought to be allotted to recent and curable patients; while the latter, owing to this defect in the regulations respecting pauper lunatics, are detained in the confined and ill-adapted apartments of workhouses—till their disease, in the early stage one of the most curable, has passed into approaching, if not confirmed, dementia.

Cases of mania and melancholia, or excitable and desponding madness—which sometimes alternate with each other, and both terminate in dementia when protracted—comprehend, with the demented, perhaps nine-tenths of the inmates of asylums. Instances of monomania, properly so termed, are comparative rare phenomena. This term is correctly applied only to cases in which the intellect is sound, unless when exercised in a particular train of thoughts. There are many in every asylum whose minds are generally occupied by some favourite illusion, who fancy themselves kings or queens, or ministers of state—but most of these persons are in all other points equally insane: they are excitable and irritable, and are but one class of maniacs. Real monomania, according to Esquirol, who invented the term, is a disease like that of Baron Swedenborg, who was capable of performing the

the duties of his office as minister to the King of Sweden, though he was so mad as to pull off his hat and make obeisance to Moses or Elijah in a crowded street, and fancied that the twelve apostles sat by him on twelve chairs in his apartment.

No other variety of mental disorder is calculated to occasion so much difficulty to commissioners, or other visitors of lunatic asylums, or to give rise to so much perplexity in courts of justice, as that unsoundness which is termed in the Report ‘Moral Insanity.’ It is defined to be an affection ‘in which the sentiments, habits, and, generally speaking, the moral feelings, rather than the intellectual faculties, are in a preternatural and disordered state.’ The common distinctive character of all these cases is of a negative kind, viz., that the faculties of the understanding remain apparently unimpaired, and that no delusive impression can be detected in the mind of the patient, which may account for the perversion of his moral dispositions. Cases of this description were formerly looked upon as unaccountable phenomena. They are, however, now recognised as a distinct form of mental disorder, in nearly all the public asylums. They are characterized by a total want of self-control, with an inordinate propensity to excesses of various kinds—among others, to intoxication. ‘This is often followed by an attack of mania, which, however, speedily subsides when the patient is confined, but is generally reproduced by the same exciting cause soon after he is discharged.’

Many of the inmates who are apparently convalescent, whose conversation betrays no trace of intellectual aberration, and who present themselves to the Commissioners as having a right to their release, are still so far disordered in their moral dispositions and habits, that nothing but the control implied in their detention within a lunatic asylum keeps them from displaying their disease. Some of these persons are still extremely dangerous, and the discrimination of their state is one of the greatest practical difficulties connected with the management of the insane. The following instance is recorded in the Report:—An epileptic lunatic, sufficiently recovered to be allowed to work on the farm of the proprietor, escaped from Gateshead Fell. He was pursued, but the wife of the patient interceded, and, as he was apparently rational, he was allowed to remain at large. Only two nights after his escape he murdered his wife and daughter in a most horrid manner. A case recorded in the Report of an American asylum is not less striking:—A black man, a lunatic, who was confined in an asylum, had followed the trade of a butcher. He had been confined many years, but from his showing no violence was considered harmless, and allowed the range of the asylum. One night the black butcher secreted a knife: he induced another patient

patient to enter his cell, prevailed on him to lie down, and then cut his throat; he calmly cut him in quarters, and distributed the joints around his cell, as he had been in the habit of arranging his meat in his shop. He solicited the custom of his comrades, and to those who were chained he carried such portions as they desired. The keeper was disturbed by the cannibal rejoicings. On examining the cells he found one man missing. He asked the black butcher if he had seen him, and the latter replied that he had just sold the last joint. This is an extreme case, but instances are known in every large asylum, displaying a total perversion of all moral feelings and social affections while the sense and intellect survive, nay, are even lively and astute—a fact which ought to convince us that illusions and other palpable defects of the understanding are not the most essential and necessary concomitants of insanity.

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**ART. VI.—*Fresco Decorations and Stuccoes of Churches and Palaces in Italy, during the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, taken from the principal Works of the greatest Painters, drawn and engraved by Thurmer, Gutensohn, Pistrucci, Gruner, and others, with English Descriptions.*** By Lewis Gruner. And an *Essay on the Ancient Arabesques, as compared with those of Raphael and his School.* By A. Hittorff. With forty-six plates, &c. Folio. London, 1844.

THE century we live in is not more remarkable for its railways and marvels of science than for a re-action from preceding barbarism in matters of taste. In architecture the age is doing for London what Augustus did for Rome: ‘gloriatus marmoream se relinquere quam *lateritiam* accepisset.’ We have the finest street and the finest bridges in Europe, and the Corso is brought into Pall Mall. In painting and sculpture it is the same. It seems as yesterday when we had no National Gallery, and when admission to the British Museum was as difficult as to the gallery of a private nobleman. All the fine arts are on the advance; and as one art leads to another we are still to seek. We find it is not enough to build houses of parliament and palaces. They must be decorated as well as built, not by upholsterers, but *secundum artem*, i. e. by artists, and how to get them is the problem which our legislators and Commissioners of Fine Arts are endeavouring to solve. This necessity has given to fresco-painting a precedence in public notice and a pre-eminence of patronage it never before enjoyed, and raised an expectation that such liberal prizes, productive exhibitions, and efficient schools of design, all directed

directed to that one branch of the art of painting, must end in something creditable if not considerable. Royalty itself has not been backward in seconding the public feeling, but has set the example of exercising the invention and skill of our native artists upon a *definite* locale.\*

Yet it is singular enough that this is the first time such a stir has been made and such results anticipated. We are not aware that any such peculiar stress has been laid upon fresco-painting by academies of art; and, in the first course of lectures delivered before *our Royal Academy*, Sir Joshua Reynolds confined himself to directing the student's attention to works in fresco as 'the productions on which the fame of the greatest masters depends,' without however adding a syllable of recommendation to practise it as an elementary method. Raffaelle's works in fresco, he says, 'ought to be the first object of our study and attention. His easel-works stand in a lower degree of estimation;' and of Michael Angelo he repeats the well-known sneer, that oil-painting is an employment only fit for women and children. We are left therefore to conclude that he did not take quite the same view of fresco-painting as his successors now do. Either he thought the age presented no fit occasion for its employment, and no hopes of its encouragement, or he viewed it as an evidence and fruit rather than as a productive cause of the highest style of art. Certain it is that no man ever rated its excellence higher, and so far therefore his silence as to its adoption in this country is the more significant. At the present day there does appear to prevail an undue reliance upon it, simply as a method or *procédé*, irrespective of the adaptation and general effect; yet it has been remarked that, so far is it from producing *of necessity* breadth and freedom, the qualities particularly looked for, that we have all over Italy examples of very poor and mean frescoes with as much dryness and want of harmony as the stiffest early oil-pictures.

The plan too of inviting artists to furnish so many pictures, painted in one place and hung up in another, as if fresco consisted only in substituting wall for canvas and another vehicle of colour for oil, narrows and delays it at the outset. None of the great works of former days were composed first, and a locale found or made for them afterwards; and at this day in Italy painters do not commence a random course of fresco-painting before some apartment or roof is entrusted to them: if their general training has been sound, they can set to work *pro re natâ*.

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\* We allude to the little Casino in the garden of Buckingham Palace. We look forward with much interest to the result of the experiment, as showing what *can* be done, and thus defining the true starting-point of an English school of fresco-painting.

But